GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2428
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Dropout Rate in Schools
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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has drawn up any schemes to check dropout rate at primary levels and to achieve the target in Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) in the country;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether it is a fact that more than eight percent of children are still dropping out of primary schools in the country and the State Government's efforts to check such dropouts are not found satisfactory; and
(d) if so, the details of the Union Government's schemes and plans to check dropout rate at primary levels and problems like quality of education, girls education and teachers absenteeism?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA)

(a) & (b): The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme in partnership of State Governments and UT Administrations for universalization of elementary education across the country and to meet the objective of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 which is the legal framework that entitles all children between the age group of 6 to 14 years free and compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education. In order to ensure schooling facility in each and every habitation, so far sanctioned 2.06 lakh primary schools have been sanctioned under SSA.
Section 4 of the RTE Act, 2009 provides for special training for age appropriate admission of out of school children. Those children who have missed out certain academic years either because they were never enrolled in school or dropped out of school, have a right to special training in residential and non residential mode, subsequently to be mainstreamed in formal schools in age appropriate class.
(c): As per Unified District Information System for Education data, the average annual dropout rate of children at primary level is 4.13% in 2014-15. This has gradually reduced from 4.67% in 2012-13 and 4.34% in 2013-14.
(d): The steps taken by the Government to reduce the dropout rate include inter-alia, strengthening of school infrastructure and facilities, residential hostel buildings for children in habitations not covered by regular schools, provisioning for additional teachers, regular training of teachers and provision for free text books and uniforms to children. The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme provides for setting up of residential upper primary schools for girls from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Other Backward Class and Minority communities. The Mid Day Meal Scheme is also being implemented with a view to enhance enrolment and retention of children in schools.
In order to focus on quality education, the Learning Outcomes for each class in Languages (Hindi, English and Urdu), Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Science and Social Science up to the elementary stage have been finalized and shared with all States and UTs. These would serve as a guideline for States and UTs to ensure that all children acquire appropriate learning level. Besides, under the SSA, the State Governments and UT Administrations are supported on several interventions to improve teaching standards, including regular in-service teachers' training, recruitment of additional teachers for improving pupil-teacher ratio, academic support for teachers through block and cluster resource centres, school grants for development of appropriate teaching-learning materials, etc.
On the issue of teachers' absenteeism, the Central Government has conducted two studies of teachers' attendance in 2006 and 2013. According to these two studies, the overall attendance of teachers improved from 81.7% to 84.3% at primary level and from 80.5% to 81.3% at upper primary level. The steps taken by the Central Government to improve teachers' attendance include, inter-alia, monitoring teachers'

attendance through School Management Committee/School Management Development Committees/ Block Resource Centres/Cluster Resource Centres. Further, the States like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Himachal Pradesh have initiated biometric attendance on pilot basis.

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